

St. Nicholas Greek Orthodox Church

Fall General Assembly Meeting Minutes

December 13, 2020

Pursuant to notice duly given, the Fall General Assembly (GA) was held on December 13, 2020 via Zoom Conference due to COVID-19 in-person gathering restrictions.

I. Call to Order: Maria Decoulos

Maria Decoulos, Chair, called the meeting to order at 11:33 AM.

50 participants were in virtual attendance, and a quorum was declared.

II. Opening Prayer

11:33 AM

Fr. Demetri opened the meeting with a prayer.

III. Nomination of Moderator

11:35 AM

Maria Decoulos presented rules of order. Motions will be voted via polling on Zoom with 30 seconds to answer. Keep an eye on the chat box to view documents. Motions will also be presented there.

Tony Gray made a motion to nominate Maria Decoulos as Moderator. Mary Delichatsios seconded motion. Maria accepted the nomination. Passed with unanimous approval.

IV. Parish Priest's Report

11:39AM

Father Demetri shared his report during the morning liturgy, and his report was also shared in a pdf file to the zoom meeting.

V. Parish President's Report (Maria Decoulos)

11:40AM

1. Thank you to the St. Nicholas family, Parish Council, Father Demetri and others.
2. Maintenance & Upkeep – have continued support as issues pop up; structural issue of a crack in a main beam of the church, contracted firm to conduct analysis of repair need (donation by

family of Buddy Demers covered the cost of this work). HVAC issue – compressor failed in late August (so no A/C), reviewing design plans of 3 possible solutions (cost of \$10K for analysis).

3. Religious Fundraising – course completed by Meli Papayannis; she will provide insights to church community in how to best approach fundraising efforts.

4. Merry Christmas everyone.

VI. Secretary's Report

11:45AM

Fall 2019 GA minutes were presented (also uploaded into Zoom meeting chat box). A typo in the first line was corrected; request to make sure attachments are included as noted.

Cesar de la Torre made a motion to accept minutes as amended. Ghada Massabni seconded motion. Motion passed with unanimous approval.

VII. Treasurer's Report

11:47AM

George Papayannis presented FY20 Year-to-Date Review:

1. We have cash or cash equivalents totaling \$350,633 and we have \$22,457 in liabilities that we expect to apply for reimbursement (see attachment for more details). Please reach out to George Papayannis if you have any questions at treasurer@stnicholaslex.org.

Bill Brown made a motion to accept Treasurer's Report as presented. George Psychojos seconded the motion. Motion passed with unanimous approval.

Vasilis Kariolis presented FY21 Budget Proposal:

2. Vasilis Kariolis is a CPA and helped write the 2021 budget. Budget presentation restructured to make it easier to report (dashboard-friendly). Not relying on festival monies as part of operating revenue. Elie Tamer worked on budget with Vasilis Kariolis and George Papayannis. Starting cash (FY20) \$350,633, Projected FY21 cash assets \$355K (by end of fiscal year 2021). Vasilis Kariolis presented details of the projected FY21 budget (see attachment.)

Question: Front stairs replacement project – what does the repair estimate reflect? Brian Macintosh shared that stair repair has gone into “hibernation;” not urgent due to pending structural failure, but not aesthetically pleasing. Jim Decoulos shared that cost would exceed \$25K if done properly. He will reach out to Ted Poulos who had offered to assist.

Question: Have we paid any local taxes yet? (asked by Tony Gray) Not yet. We were notified that we might have tax if we collect income not part of the operations of the church (example – putting a cell phone tower on a steeple). But we have not had any taxes billed or received notice that this is pending from the town. The \$12K in the budget appears as a potential item that may occur.

Question: Bill Brown asked if timber frame repairs estimate will be deferred to 50-Year committee assessment of timing/future steps? We are still in exploratory phase so repair is not in operating budget. Urgency of repair will have to inform next steps.

Question: Penelope Tzourgos – on the HVAC repair, will we wait for next summer or wait until we figure out if we will move from current building? It depends on timing of 50-Year committee findings and whether a less expensive cooling solution can be had for less money.

Question: Penelope Tzourgos – how are legacy gifts being earmarked and is donor being memorialized in some way? Those funds are non-operating/unrestricted.

Vasilis Kariolis shared that a mid-year re-forecast (in April/May timeframe) will provide update on how budget is progressing.

Comment: Tom Tsaros made a comment to clarify as per bylaws if unrestricted gift comes in only the GA can vote on its use.

Question: Chris Kokkinos - in proposed budget for FY21 will we see comparison to prior years as we have done in the past, or is that level of detail not continuing? There is more detail in the pdf file, but not year-to-year comparison.

Tom Tsaros made a motion to approve FY21 Parish Budget. Cesar de la Torre seconded the motion. Motion passed with unanimous approval.

George Papayannis thanked Vasilis Kariolis and Elie Tamer for joining him on the budget team this year, and thanked Chris Kokkinos, Bill Brown, and the Audit Committee for their continued feedback on their controls.

VIII. Stewardship Report

12:19PM

Ghada Massabni shared the Stewardship Report (see attachment):

1. Status and Participation – thank you for your generosity; this year we have received \$182,169 (\$10,632 more than last year); there are fewer families contributing (179 this year compared to 183 last year).
2. Concerns – who will be back when corona is behind us? Have people become accustomed to worshiping from home? Will they receive the Eucharist?
3. Request – encourage family and friends to come back to church when corona is behind us. If you know of people who refuse, please get Father involved.

Question from Penelope Tzourgos - have we had any new members this year? Yes, we have.

Ghada Massabni thanked us for supporting her and will be handing off the baton and is ready to support the next Stewardship leader. (Thank you, Ghada for your Stewardship vlogs!)

IX. Selection of Audit Committee

12:25PM

Per by-laws must select parishioners-in-good-standing who have not been on Parish Council in the past year.

Mary Delichatsios nominated Chris Kokkinos to the Audit Committee. Seconded by Ghada Massabni. Chris Kokkinos conditionally accepts if team is familiar with Excel (current Audit system).

Ghada Massabni nominated Mary Delichatsios. Seconded by Penelope Tzourgos. Mary travels frequently so suggests perhaps someone else and respectfully declines.

Mary Delichatsios nominated Bill Brown. Seconded by Bill Sager. Bill Brown respectfully declines. Suggests new, younger community members support this effort.

Chris Kokkinos offered amendment to his requirement – Chris will be willing to coalesce worksheets as long as support team knows basic Excel to be able to at least use a single worksheet. Chris agrees that training new community members to take this on is important for the future.

PC will work on recruiting individuals to work together for Audit Committee.

X. New Business

12:32PM

1. Structural Update – Alex Brown

Alex Brown can answer questions regarding structural issue; analysis is pending from SGH.

Question from Penelope Tzourgos – what sense does Alex have of the severity? On-site review deemed that there was not an urgent/catastrophic failure but should be addressed soon. Full design analysis and proposed repair steps will be in the report. This will be used to obtain pricing for repair.

Question from George Psyhojos - any signs of movement/change? No. Review of photo comparison for 10 years ago does not appear to show changes in cracks.

Question from Penelope Tzourgos – does this preclude the long-range planning for expansion? No.

2. HVAC System – Brian Macintosh, Tom Tsaros, Jim Decoulos

Question from Penelope Tzourgos – what is the least we can get away with? Big fans? Brian Macintosh – if the community doesn't want a full replacement system than portable A/C coolers could be deployed next year.

Question from Penelope Tzourgos – is GA being asked to approve \$10K to fund design review? Maria thought no, but Brian thinks yes, we should vote on this today so that design review can take place.

Question from Penelope Tzourgos – what is cost of portable units and would that get us through the summer? Arthur Skambas suggested temporary units but Brian has not research this; guessed \$3-4K.

Jim Decoulos shared that Arthur Skambas suggested installing mini-split air conditioners not portable units which are more costly (\$25K). Brian Macintosh says no, Arthur Skambas meant the portable A/C floor units. Jim doesn't think these are effective for a large indoor space. Brian Macintosh offered to research this further and discuss with Arthur to see if this is a viable approach.

Bill Brown thinks we should authorize money so we can get the study done at same time while looking at stop-gap measure.

Arthur Skambas shared that “move and cools” are portable units (\$2,500 – 3,000 each) that are proposed as a temporary solution.

Question from George Psyhojos - have we asked contractors if they would bid without a detailed study? Brian says no, we need professional engineering to design out viable options.

Bill Brown made a motion to authorize \$10,000 expenditure to conduct study of HVAC schematic design. (Bill withdrew this motion.)

Tom Tsaros commented that AC is not working in hall or church (Father shared that there is one small A/C unit in the altar) and we should look at the bigger picture; we will not move from this building for at least 10 years, so we need a 10-year solution not short-term portable units. Tom recommended we do a schematic design study (a permanent solution to the facility we have now.)

Tom Tsaros made a motion to spend up to \$12,000 for an HVAC schematic design study to review options for the Hall and the Nave (to include an allowance for potential structural review), and to be funded from an unrestricted legacy gift. Alex Constantine seconded.

Question from Penelope Tzougros – what about altar and classrooms? Altar has AC and classrooms are partially below grade so are usually cool. Father’s office, main office and conference room have own air conditioning.

Mandy Zervoglos shared that classrooms are usually cold and Sunday School not held in summer.

Question from Patty DiOrio - is replacing the condenser an option? I understand that this doesn’t fix the legacy issues. I would imagine we’ll do a more optimized plan if we decide on the renovate option.

Jim Decoulos commented that air handler can be supported by structural design.

Question from Penelope Tzourgos – is there a budget item about repair for the boiler? Brian Mackintosh \$3,500 needed to repair “guts” for current boiler which would have it last 10 years after the repair; this is not part of the HVAC study.

Question from Don Khouri to Tom Tsaros - Tom, could you explain, what seems to me to be a large expense for options? Is there a more economical way to understand our options before

spending \$12K of the community's money? Tom Tsaros shared that this review by engineers is to determine cooling, heating and ventilation needs and code requirements. Estimates 60-hour project at about \$100/hour plus additional \$1-2K for a structural engineer.

Question from Don Khouri – is there any other option that doesn't lead to a \$120K path? Jim Decoulos replied that study needed and that we may not need to move forward with a six-figure solutions, but this is the best way to figure out what we need. Tom added that by law in Massachusetts that if we are to do anything other than replace what is already there, then we need to address air quality and energy efficiency.

Question from Don Khouri to George Papayannis – are there dollars in the accruals account versus from the legacy gifts? Yes, there is money there.

Amendment to motion: Don Khouri made an amendment that funds be taken from the Accruals Account instead of the unrestricted Legacy Gifts. Seconded by Alexa Vafiades.

George Papayannis reminded GA that if money is not in budget it must come back to GA for approval, so would like numbers included in motions before we start voting on them.

Question from Jason Kontos - Can we just replace condenser unit outside and not do design study? Tom Tsaros shared that the condenser can be replaced for less than \$12K but will be connecting to HVAC unit in hall which is possibly on its last legs. Air handler unreliable. Jason Kontos suggested that we use a band aid approach because of the 50-Year Committee work to explore future steps.

George Papayannis commented that we have been talking about timing for a while, can we decide by June to make decisions?

Jason Kontos suggests we get through one more summer because we are likely to proceed with HVAC system replacement after investing \$12K on design study, and he again proposed band aid approach.

Bill Brown comments that if we choose band aid approach, then Brian should get help on Maintenance because so much work.

Carol suggests that we should vote on engineering design because whatever 50-year committee finds, we need to move on the motion for the engineering design because we can use that in future plans for the church.

Jim Decoulos commented that the engineering design is not an endorsement of a full system replacement. We can still replace condenser or provide portable solutions next summer.

VOTE on AMENDMENT - 89% in favor 11% abstained. Amendment passes.

Amended motion: Tom Tsaros made a motion to spend up to \$12,000 for an HVAC schematic design study to review options for the Hall and the Nave (to include an allowance for potential structural review), and to be funded from the Accruals account.

VOTE on MOTION – 64% in favor, 33% opposed, 3% abstained. Motion passes.

Tony Gray - If we (the parish) had to pay someone to do Brian Mackintosh's work over the past years, and going forward, it would far exceed the monies we are voting on [so.. a) THANK YOU, BRIAN and b) I'm voting yes :)]

3. 50-year Leadership Committee Update - Jason Kontos

1:28 PM

Please see attachment. Survey has been finalized, and developed videos. Plan to survey community this spring and share documentation/info at that time. Committee has not been able to do planned outreach at Coffee Hour but working through this obstacle. Committee may ask for extension in Spring, but we will see.

4. \$50,000 Unrestricted Legacy Gift - George Papayannis

1:32 PM

Where should this gift be placed? Currently in non-operating budget. These monies are unrestricted, but not "free money,"; the GA would decide how to spend. Suggestion to place in Accrual, Endowment or Fidelity/Investment.

Bill Brown commented that Fidelity does not earn much interest and should be invested in a way that can earn more money. Don Khouri shared that allocation of funds were approved by Parish Council but those are moving forward into the allocated agreed accounts.

Question from Tom Tsaros - what is account profile of investment? Don Khouri shared that a moderate strategy was approved by Parish Council, a 60% equity 40% fixed income – more for a long-term investment. Don advocates adding the \$50K here, but if needed short term then put the funds somewhere else.

Penelope Tzourgos suggests putting half into accrals and half into Fidelity so that some is available.

Motion by George Papayannis to move to transfer the \$50,000 legacy gift into two funds with the following split: \$25,000 to Accrals account, \$25,000 to Fidelity account. Seconded by Bill Sager. In favor 94% opposed 3% abstain 3%. Motion passes.

5. Maintenance budget

The boiler repair will use half the budget available so suggest use money from Accrals account. Brian Mackintosh says cost is \$3,500.

George Papayannis moves to spend \$3,500 from the Accrals account to rebuild one of the boilers. Tom Tsaros seconds. Motion passes unanimously.

XI. Meeting Adjournment

1:48PM

Elizabeth de la Torre made a motion to adjourn. Jason Kontos seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

Thank you to Maria Decoulos, Don Khouri, Jason Kontos and Father Demetri for running the meeting.

Father Demetri closed the meeting with a prayer.

Respectfully Submitted,

Eleni Digenis-Bury
Parish Council Secretary

Attachments: *Parish Priest Report Fall GA 2020.pdf*
SNGOC 50 year Update 120920.pdf
SNGOC Minutes Fall 2019.pdf
Stewardship Report
SNOG TreasurersReport_20201213GA.pdf
1SNOG 2021 budget_20201213GA_Slides.pdf
1SNOG Stewardship PCReport 2020-11-30.pdf